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Royalty at the Races

PERFECT weather prevailed for the Guineas meeting at Newmarket last week, and the Heath was more crowded than it has been since last July, for the October meetings were not so well attended. Last week, moreover, the place looked itself again, and on the day of the big race the enclosure and stands were thronged. The King came in time for the first race, and stayed till the end. With his Majesty were Lord Londonderry, Lord Durham, Lord Coventry, Lord Falmouth, and other members of the Jockey Club, from whose private stand the King watched the racing, going to the Paddock more than once during the afternoon.

Among those entertaining for the meeting were Lord and Lady Wolverton, who brought several friends from Queensbury House. Lady Wolverton wore a gown of soft black charmeuse on the "Guineas" day, and an all-black hat; and with her came Lady Meux in a coat and skirt of deep peacock blue, with purple facings, and a combination of the two colours in her hat.

Lady Dalmeny, who came with Lord Rosebery, wore a gown of dull rose-colour, a shade she often affects, and little Lady Villiers was in grey, with an upturned hat. Mrs. Cecil Bingham was in dark blue charmeuse, and Lady Suffolk was very quietly dressed in black.

The King returned to London on Friday, and this week his Majesty will be out of town from Tuesday to Saturday on a visit to the fleets in Weymouth Bay. He will stay on board the *Victoria and Albert* each night, and by day will hoist his flag on the *Neptune*.

The Royal Family

While the King was at Newmarket last week the Queen made several expeditions by motor, one of them being to Windsor Castle. The Park there is looking its loveliest now, and her Majesty remained for some hours, visiting the gardens both before and after luncheon. She was accompanied by Prince Albert, who has now returned to Dartmouth. Queen Alexandra and the Empress Marie postponed their arrival at Marlborough House, and the plans of the Royal sisters are indefinite. The Princess Royal and her daughters are staying on quietly in Portman Square till they go to Mar Lodge later on.

Prince Arthur of Connaught was in town last week, and was present at the Opera at Covent Garden one night, with his cousin, Princess Marie Louise of Schleswig-Holstein. Contrary to general expectation, Princess Patricia of Connaught will not be in London this season, as she is accompanying her parents first to New Brunswick and then on their journey to the Prairie Provinces, and eventually to British Columbia.

Dances, Past and Present

The season has opened most auspiciously, and already several quite large dances have taken place. One of the best of last week's was the dance given by Lady Arthur Butler at the Ritz to celebrate the début of her younger daughter, Miss Rachael Butler.

Among those present at the dance, many of whom dined with Lord and Lady Arthur Butler at the Ritz beforehand, were the Duchess of Wellington, who brought Lady Eileen Wellesley, Lady Bessborough, with Lady Gweneth Ponsonby, the latter looking very pretty in pale green ninon, and Lady Strathallan, the mother-in-law of Mrs. Rupert Drummond, the elder daughter of the hostess. Mrs. Drummond looked very pretty in white, with a bandeau of diamonds in her hair. Lady Salisbury wore black, and her daughter, Lady Beatrice Cecil, was in pale blue, a colour also worn by Miss Lucia White, who was chaperoned by her father, Lord Annaly. Lady Crossley was chaperoning a daughter, and so was Lady Northbrook, who looked very pretty in black, with a black plume among the diamonds in her coiffure.

Mrs. Hwfa Williams' dance at Claridge's was another of last week's fixtures, and it was as smart as one given in mid-season.

Mrs. Charles Trotter's dance at the Ritz was another successful one. She is a sister of the present Lord Hamilton of Dalzell and of Mrs. Henry Lonsdale, and did some entertaining last year.

This week dances are legion, among them being the ball to be given jointly by Lady Lindsay and Mrs. John Dugdale. The former's only child, Lady Muriel Bertie, made her début last season.

H.R.H. PRINCESS LOUISE, DUCHESS OF ARGYLL,
who inaugurated the magnificent new front at Blackpool last week

The Primrose League

The annual meetings of the Primrose League are being held this week, and never before has there been such a demand for tickets for the big demonstration, which will take place in the Albert Hall on Friday, when Mr. Bonar Law will for the first time address the League in his capacity of leader of the Unionist party. Lord Curzon, the Chancellor of the League, is giving an evening party to the delegates of the Habitations, at Carlton House Terrace, on Thursday night, and he is previously giving a dinner party to some of the League's leading members. The Primrose League is in some ways the most successful example of women's work in politics, and that for the somewhat paradoxical reason that it has never been an exclusively feminine organisation! It was originally founded as a means of enlisting women's social gifts on behalf of those political causes which had been considered especially the province of men, but the genius of its founders was shown in the way in which both departments were blended. The political side of the League was not left to the men and the social side to the women; but, while each sex led in its own department, each gained something of the character of the other. The Primrose Dames have never been alarmingly feministe or strong-minded politicians, and the various women's political organisations which have been formed, with that imitation which implies flattery, have none of them had quite the social *elan* which distinguished, and still distinguishes, the Ladies' Grand Council of the Primrose League.

In Ireland

An Irish correspondent writes:—"The races at Ashtown, close to Phœnix Park, followed close on Punchestown, and the stands were full to overflowing."

GOWNS AND GOSSIP:

DRESS OF THE HOUR

MY Best Friend —I never remember a more determined adherence to the coat and skirt than we have seen this spring. Probably more liberty and a consequent demand for practical clothes is at the bottom of such loyalty; but whatever the cause, the tailors are immersed in work, and everybody is to be seen in a spring suit, grey, sand colour, black and white, or dark blue.

It is really an interesting point, this resistance to all attempts to lessen the importance of the coat and skirt. The complete gown for the afternoon is naturally to the fore; it is the appropriate garment for great functions, and over it is worn a long satin or taffetas coat if necessary. The smart coat and skirt, however, is running it very close, and silk coats and skirts, or, rather, skirts with attached lace and ninon bodices, are accompanied by the most jaunty little coats imaginable. But it is the well-made light tweed suit that interests me; and having kept my eyes open, I am much amused to see that it refuses to be ignored. I send you the portrait of one that I admired the other week at Sandown, and I saw almost the identical thing upon a pretty American girl when we lunched with Rosalind at the Carlton. I asked that august votary of Fashion how she accounted for the fresh impulse for the *trotteur*, and her reply, terse and oracular, was "Motors, my dear."

Motors, then, have to be regarded as an important factor of fashion. They have altered our lives completely. We go farther afield for our pleasures; our friends live all round about the near counties, or they use houses and flats for the middle of the week, and flee away from Friday to Monday to the quiet of the country. Naturally enough, this causes the rest of us to add to the number of suits and of simple cotton frocks, and to reduce to the minimum the toilets that are only useful for the height of the season and the really very smart occasion.

I can't help thinking how very delightful this passion for the suit is, and how obliging to those who cannot afford to spend an income on clothes. It levels things up, and gives an additional advantage to many people. A grey and white stripe suit, worn with a nice jabot and a wing-trimmed hat, is what we can all use in the May mornings. If it is only moderately warm, we shall go on wearing it in June, and it will be handy on numberless occasions of the week-end description.

On cold days at Hurlingham the smart coats and skirts look so well, worn with appropriate hats, and their wearers preserve a charming general appearance, while those who are clad inadequately threaten to perish miserably, or, at any rate, give the impression that they will do so shortly!

A mutual friend of yours and mine, who is forty, tall, and imposing-looking, has arranged her season's clothes upon a very reasonable plan, and her equipment seems to me to be just what you want. For hi-tum ti-tum she has a black taffetas, very prettily veiled in a mild kind of panier drapery of flecked net, and she has also a very smart taffetas coat to use with this and other garments. Then a very becoming walking-length gown of dark old-blue satin, touched with black, and made in a somewhat severe style, will look very well, accompanied by a short feather boa or a ruffle with long ends and a feather-laden hat of black tagal. A mercerized cotton poplin suit in a dull grey shade has a wrap-over skirt and a short coat with attached basque, the relief appearing in one of the new oval-shaped collars of fine white Indian embroidery. A dark blue cotton sponge-cloth frock has some touches upon it of Russian embroidery, and the back is immensely improved by the addition of a black satin sash, with fringed ends. These gowns, with a last season's black silk voile, will do well; and for evening a very charming black stripe *charmeuse*, relieved with black and white lace, a lovely grey brocade almost unadorned, and a wine-coloured satin, veiled with ninon a shade more grey, will be worn. Tea-gowns and a couple of home dinner-gowns are, of course, part of the complement.

A grey suit for summer days

The dressing of this particular friend is interesting, because she goes out a great deal. There are few days when she is not, so to speak, out in the full gaze of the public eye. I attribute her success to the fact that she has so nice a sense of adjustment that she is never left with hundreds of clothes and nothing to wear, as so many people seem to be!

She will have a hat for mornings that will go with any of her morning gowns, a best hat that can accompany either of her best gowns, an *en tout cas* that will play aide-de-camp to all, and a driving coat that will quarrel with no item of her wardrobe.

I remember once hearing of a young party who was for ever behind-hand with her allowance, who was pursued by little bills, and whose clothes were always inappropriate. She was a severe trial to her parents, and a still worse problem to the nice man who married her.

She, however, was only one of hundreds who manage their clothes badly; and I am convinced that now, when we seem to be waking up to a realisation of the necessity for domestic training, we might add the subject of clothing, or make it an integral part of the scheme.

Now, I make so bold as to aver that I have taught you many things as regards schemes of colour, and I have even, at the risk of being considered wearisome, pointed out how easy it is to shipwreck a good allowance on the rocks of random choice. Different kinds of pinks, blues that refuse to associate, coats and skirts that cannot be made to share a hat or a parasol, blouses that are pretty in themselves and useless for wearing with the suits in hand —all these diverse items must be bought upon some plan, some consistent kind of arrangement, or bad dressing is inevitable.

Once upon a time I wrote to you about dress schemes, and I was roundly abused for my pains, because numbers of girls complained that they could not even afford to buy decent tailor-mades that keep their shape. This is no longer in the least true; for, happily, clothes that are suited to one's walk in life, and yet charming and graceful, are now available for everybody, and, luckily, bad cut is as extinct as the dodo. I can quite see that girls who are busy have no time to make clothes; but they can at least trim their hats now and again, make trifles, such as rabats and jabots, and keep their clothes in order. Those who have a maid and plenty of money can do more or less as they like; but I always derive immense consolation from the knowledge that many of my most charming friends are obliged to pursue economical methods, and contrive to look nicer than those to whom fate may have sent a better-filled purse.

Ever yours, LYDIA LOVELACE.

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